

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
FOOD SAFETY AND INSPECTION SERVICE
WASHINGTON, DC

<h1 style="margin:0;">FSIS DIRECTIVE</h1>	2620.1 REVISION 4	11/3/11
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RECORDS MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

I. PURPOSE

This directive:

- A. Describes FSIS policy on records management.
- B. Gives guidelines for a uniform file and disposal system.
- C. Assigns responsibilities for carrying out the records management program in FSIS.

II. CANCELLATION

This directive cancels FSIS Directive 2620.1, Revision 3, Records Management Program, dated 6/4/02.

III. REASON FOR REISSUANCE

This directive updates responsibilities and information for carrying out the records management program.

IV. REFERENCES

DR 3080-001, Records Management
FSIS Directive 1300.7, Managing Information Technology (IT) Resources
FSIS Records Management Handbook
18 U.S.C. 2071, Concealment, removal, or mutilation generally
44 U.S.C. 3101, Records management by agency heads; general duties
44 U.S.C. 3301, Definition of records
44 U.S.C., Chapter 21, National Archives and Records Administration
44 U.S.C., Chapter 29, Records Management by the Archivist of the United States and by the Administrator of General Services
44 U.S.C., Chapter 31, Records Management by Federal Agencies
44 U.S.C., Chapter 33, Disposal of Records

DISTRIBUTION:
Electronic; All Field Employees

OPI:
ASD – Information Management and
Analysis Branch

V. ABBREVIATIONS AND FORMS

The following appear in their shortened form in this directive:

ASD	Administrative Services Division
FRC	Federal Records Center
GRS	General Records Schedule
IMAB	Information Management and Analysis Branch, ASD
NARA	National Archives and Records Administration
RLO	Records Liaison Officer
RMO	Records Management Officer
SF 115	Request for Records Disposition Authority

VI. POLICY

It is FSIS policy to ensure that each employee creates and maintains proper and adequate documentation of the organization, functions, policies, decisions, procedures, and essential transactions of the Agency to protect the legal and financial rights of the Government and of persons directly affected by the Agency's activities. (See 44 U.S.C. 3101.)

VII. DEFINITIONS

A. **Administrative Records.** Records relating to budget, personnel, supply, and similar housekeeping, or facilitative functions, common to most agencies in contrast to program records.

B. **Automated Information System.** An electronic program that involves FSIS mainframe computers or networks, or a specialized program where the electronic file is the official FSIS record, or where no paper copy is produced. Records originating from the programs do not include internal electronic working files, such as word processing, database, or spreadsheet documents, where paper or microfilm output is the official records copy.

C. **Cutoff.** The breaking or ending of files at regular intervals, usually at the end of a fiscal or calendar year.

D. **Disposal.** Actions taken regarding temporary records after their retention periods expire and consisting usually of destruction or occasionally of donation.

E. **Disposition.** Actions taken regarding records no longer needed for current Government business. These actions include transfer to Agency storage facilities or FRCs, transfer from one Federal agency to another, transfer of permanent records to NARA, and disposal of temporary records.

F. **FRC.** A records center established, maintained, and operated by NARA for the storage, processing, and servicing of records for Federal agencies.

G. **Nonrecords.** U.S. Government-owned documentary materials excluded from the legal definition of records for not meeting the requirements of that definition. Nonrecords include extra copies of documents kept only for convenience of reference, stocks of publications and of processed documents, and library or museum materials intended solely for reference or exhibition.

H. **Permanent Records.** Records appraised by NARA as having sufficient historical or other value to warrant continued preservation by the Federal Government beyond the time they are needed for administrative, legal, or fiscal purpose.

I. **Personal Papers.** Documentary materials, or any reasonably differentiable portion thereof, of a private or nonpublic character that do not relate to, or have an effect upon, the conduct of Agency business. If information about private matters and Agency business appears in the same document, the document should be copied at the time of receipt, with the personal information deleted, and treated as a Federal record.

J. **Program Records.** Records documenting unique, substantive Agency functions, as opposed to administrative records.

K. **Record Series.** File units, or documents, arranged according to a filing system, or kept together because they relate to a particular subject or function, or result from an activity, document a specific type of transaction, take a particular physical form, or have some other relationship arising from their creation, receipt, or use, such as restrictions on access or use.

L. **Recordkeeping Requirements.** All statements in statutes, regulations, Department regulations, manuals, notices, Secretary's memoranda, and operating unit directives that provide general and specific guidance for personnel on creating and maintaining records.

M. **Recordkeeping System.** A manual or electronic system in which records are collected, organized, and categorized to facilitate their presentation, retrieval, use, and disposition.

N. **Records.** All books, papers, maps, photographs, machine-readable materials, or other documentary materials, regardless of physical form or characteristics, made or received by an agency of the U.S. Government under Federal law or in connection with the transaction of public business and preserved or appropriate for preservation by that agency or its legitimate successor as evidence of the organization, functions, policies, decisions, procedures, operations, or other activities of the Government or because of the informational value of data in them. Library and museum material made or acquired and preserved solely for reference or exhibition purposes, extra copies of documents preserved only for convenience of reference, and stocks of publications and of processed documents are not included. (See 44 U.S.C. 3301.)

O. **Records Lifecycle.** An archival concept that describes the lifespan of a record from its creation or receipt, to its final disposition. **NOTE:** The records lifecycle is divided into the following stages or phases:

1. Creation or receipt.
2. Maintenance and use.
3. Final disposition.

P. **Records Management.** The planning, controlling, directing, organizing, training, promoting, and other managerial activities related to the creation, maintenance, use, and disposition of records to achieve adequate and proper documentation of Federal policies, transactions, and effective and economical management of Agency operations.

Q. **Records Retention.** The time period for which records are required to be kept prior to final disposition.

R. **Records Schedule.** A document approved by NARA, which provides authority for the final disposition of recurring or nonrecurring records. This includes Standard Form (SF) 115, Request for Records Disposition Authority, and the GRS. Records should not be destroyed except as authorized by an approved records schedule.

S. **RLO.** Designated FSIS employee responsible, in coordination with the Agency RMO, for implementing and maintaining an efficient and cost effective Agency records management program.

T. **Temporary Records.** Records approved by NARA for disposal, either immediately, or after a specified retention period. They are also called disposable records or nonpermanent records.

U. **Unscheduled Records.** Records that do not have a disposition approved by NARA.

V. **Working Files.** Preliminary drafts, rough notes, and similar materials used to prepare final copies. Working files may meet the statutory definition of records and should be maintained to ensure adequate and proper documentation if:

1. They were circulated and made available to employees other than the creator for official purposes such as approval, comment, action, recommendation, followup, or to communicate with Agency staff about Agency business.

2. They contain unique information, such as substantive annotations or comments, that adds to a proper understanding of the Agency's formulation and execution of basic policies, decisions, actions, or responsibilities.

VIII. RESPONSIBILITIES

A. IMAB.

1. Formulates, directs, and coordinates the FSIS records management program.

2. Serves as the FSIS liaison with the Department and NARA on records management.

3. Ensures compliance with Federal, Department, and FSIS standards of recordkeeping requirements.

4. Develops uniform records systems, including paper and electronic systems, and records disposition schedules.

5. Establishes clear and practical guidance in the proper management of Agency records through their lifecycles.

6. Collaborates with Agency program managers, senior management, and staff to develop, maintain, update, and properly apply Agency records schedules.

7. Conducts surveys of records management practices.

8. Conducts training sessions with employees involved in records management activities.

B. Staff and Program Offices.

1. Designate RLO to coordinate for records management activities and to serve as the liaison between the program and the RMO.

2. Direct that designated records custodians cut off subject correspondence files on an annual or other regular basis, promptly close out case files, and transfer or destroy inactive records according to the appropriate records schedule.

3. Cooperate with IMAB in responding to requests for information and in the implementation of a records management program. This may include periodic audits and evaluations of Agency administrative, program, vital, and disaster recovery records management functions.

4. Notify IMAB of organization or program changes that will result in the establishment of new types of records, the transfer or termination of records no longer required, or an increase or decrease in the retention time of the records and obtain NARA approval when necessary.

5. Notify IMAB when planning future systems, new applications, or substantial modification to existing systems or to applications for records maintenance and disposition.

C. RLO.

1. Coordinate the records management activities for their program.

2. Develop file plans and procedures to organize records and make them easily accessible when needed.

3. Assist with disposition activities, including retirement of inactive records, transfer of permanent records to NARA, and destruction of records in accordance with approved Record Schedules.

4. Review office Record Schedules annually to ensure they are current.

D. FSIS Officials and Employees.

1. Maintain personal papers separately from official records. Proper separation of personal papers is essential to ensure the security and integrity of Federal records. 18 U.S.C. 2071 provides for the assessment of criminal penalties for the unlawful removal, transfer, or destruction of Federal records.

2. Preserve electronic and hardcopy records as outlined in the *FSIS Records Management Handbook* (Handbook), used exclusively by FSIS employees.

3. Dispose of records scheduled for destruction in a way that protects all sensitive, proprietary, or national security information, as outlined in the Federal laws and related regulations summarized in the Handbook.

4. Safeguard records until they are authorized for disposition. The unauthorized removal, concealment, falsification, mutilation, or obliteration of official records is prohibited by law and is subject to penalty. (See 18 U.S.C. 2071.)

5. Report any apparent instances of unauthorized disposition to their supervisor and to IMAB.

6. Preserve any unscheduled records and promptly inform IMAB of their existence.

7. Notify the RMO, or designated records liaison officer, when records are no longer needed for the conduct of current business, but cannot yet be disposed of, and are eligible for transfer to an FRC.

8. Return records to an authorized successor (or to IMAB if no successor has been designated) when leaving a position or when an office closes.

IX. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

A. Additional information and guidance is available on the records management FSIS Intranet site at <https://inside.fsis.usda.gov/fsis/emp/static/global/offices/oSpace/asdOffice/informationBranch/recordsSection/recordsSection.jsp>. **NOTE:** Agency Record Schedules are also available in the Handbook section.

B. Direct all questions pertaining to the records management program to RecordsManagement@fsis.usda.gov.



Acting Assistant Administrator
Office of Management